India prefers the multilateral to the regional approach. Our efforts have been to strengthen multilateralism during the Uruguay Round as it is believed that non discriminatory trade offers the greatest promise for expansion of world trade.

Trade Negotiations in the Context of Dunkel Draft

343. SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the latest stage of trade negotiations ; and

(b) what extent the Dunkel Draft affects the interests of the country ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) The Uruguay Round Negotiations have entered the final phase. According to the present schedule negotiations are to be comcluded by December 15, 1993.

As the Dunkel proposals are still being negotiated a final assessment of the implications is premature at this stage. However, an analysis made be the government indicates that some of the positive features of the Dunkel text are :

(1) It seeks to strengthen the multilateraltrading system by providing a detailed framework of rules to govern international trade. In many aspects, these rules provide for special dispensaiton for developing countries.

(2) It provides for reduction of subsidies and other trade barriers in the field of agrculture, at enlarging global market access and better price realization for agricultural products.

(3) It provides for the integration of textiles and clothing into the GATT trading framework within a finite time frame of ten years.

(4) The proposed agreement on Trade In Services provides a multilateral framework for negotiating concessions, inter alia, in the area of movement of personnel.

(5) In TRIPs in provides for a ten year transition period for the introduction of product patents in the case of countries which are presently not granting such patents in certain areas.

Some of the negative features are :—

(1) The rules on anti-dumping have not been improved sufficienally.

(2) In textiles the phase-out process is back loaded.

(3) In the text on agriculture there are certain ambiguities which need to be clarified.

(4) In TRIPs, in the area of patents sufficient flexiblity has not been provided in respect of compulsory licensing particularly for food and pharmaceuticals. The text is also not clear on the treatment of importation as working of patents. Furthermore, while the text allows exclusion from patents of plants and animals, it mandates patenting of micro organisms.

Changes Sought in Dunkel Draft

344. SHRI N. E. BELARAM :
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE :
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU :
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have sought certain changes and modifications in the Dunkel Draft to suit Indian Interests and concerns especially the interests of the two focus groups the farmers and the poor ;

(b) if so, what precise changes are sought to be interoduced by Government in

the Dunkel proposals indicating the objective to be achieved by each change; and

(c) what is the response of GATT community thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) In respect of concerns affecting farmers we have sought a provision to the effect that an effective sui-generis system of plant variety protection may also provide for farmers' and researchers' consumptions The objective is to ensure that the traditional practice of farmers using seed from one crop for planting in the next crop is not affected, and that researchers can use protected varieties for further modifications.

(ii) We have also sought a dilution of the provisions concerning patenting of micro-organisms. The objective is to ensure that the naturally occurring gene sequences are not brought within this the scope of patentability.

(iii) In respect of concerns affecting the poor, we have sought an amendment to the text which would clarify that our public distribution system involving procurement, stocking and sale at subsidized prices is exempt from the disciplines envisaged in the agreement on agriculture.

(c) The reaction of our trading partners to the above mentioned proposals has been as follows :

(i) It is generally agreed that the farmers 'and researchers' exemptions are compatible with a sui-generis system of plant variety protection. However, another participant has suggested that the provision should also include the elements of the sui-generis protection. This has not been accepted by us. Negotiations are continuing.

(ii) No agreement has been possible so far on our proposal on micro-organisms as many countries are of the view that the existing provisions of the text are adequate to take care of our concerns. Negotiations are continuing.

(iii) It is generally agreed that India's public distribution system is not affected by the agreement on agriculture. Negotiations are going on to find a suitable formulation for incorporation in the text.

Decision on Dunkel Proposals

345. SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS :
SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA :
DR. BAPU KALDATE :
SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have since agreed to accept the Dunkel proposals in the field of agriculture/chemicals; if so the details thereof;

(b) whether Government are aware that the delay in the final decision on the acceptance has generated controversy among farmers/general public;

(c) whether Government would propose to make its stand clear and announce a final decision in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (d) The Uruguay Round Negotiations are still in progress and Government is seeking improvements, changes and understandings in the Draft Final Act. The question of accepting the Uruguay Round results will arise when the results of negotiations are available.

India's Performance on Exports and Imports

346. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA :
SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY :
SHRI G. G. SWELL :
SHRI MOHD. KHALEELUR RAHMAN :
SHRI SARADA MOHANTY :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :